1876MNRAS..36R.136.

A brief notice of the last paper is given in a subsequent section of the Report.

The frequent application for our *Monthly Notices* from Societies and foreign astronomers, and also from the general public, is a good example of the appreciation of the contents of the *Notices.* Volume XXXV., lately published, contains several important papers, which fully maintain the high character which our popular monthly serial has attained.

OBITUARY.

The Council have to deplore the loss of the following Fellows and Associates during the past year, some of whom were constant attendants at our meetings and former members of the Council.

Fellows :—Carl L. C. Becker, Esq.
R. C. Carrington, Esq., F.R.S,
W. S. Davis, Esq., LL.D.
Murray Gladstone, Esq.
Lieut.-Col. John Jones.
Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Ryan, F.R.S.
Rev. Professor W. Selwyn, D.D., F.R.S.
Charles B. Vignoles, Esq., F.R.S.

Associates :—Professor F. W. A. Argelander.
Professor H. L. D'Arrest.
Monsr. Claude L. Mathieu.

CARL LUDWIG CHRISTIAN BECKER was born at Ratzeburg, in the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg Strelitz, on July 16, 1821. He received his general education at the Gymnasium of Ratzeburg, of which his father was the head master. On leaving school he chose for himself the profession of a mechanician and his father at first put him with Repsold, of Hamburg. He then studied in the works of Krafft, of Vienna, and subsequently in those of Steinheil, at Munich. In 1849 he came to London, where his mechanical ingenuity was soon recognised, and in 1858 he became manager for Messrs. Elliott Brothers, Electrical Engineers and Opticians. In 1873 he became a member of their firm and continued to work hard at his business until within a few days of his death.

We may say, without the slightest fear of exaggeration, that there is hardly anyone who has, within the last ten or fifteen years, pursued physical science in England who will not look upon the death of Mr. Becker as a real loss. He showed himself to be most ingenious and accurate in everything he undertook, and at the same time his obliging and courteous manner won for him the friendship of all with whom he was brought into contact.

Lord Lindsay took Mr. Becker with his party to observe the

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Eclipse of 1870, near Cadiz; he was more fortunate than some other members of the Spanish Expedition, and obtained polarimeter measures of the intensity of the atmospheric polarisation during totality, as well as a drawing of the corona. He became a Fellow of our Society in January 1874, and died on April 3, 1875, from an attack of bronchitis.

Richard Christopher Carrington was born on the 26th of May 1826, at Chelsea. He was the second son of Mr. Richard Carrington, a brewer, at Brentford, in Middlesex. At seven years old he was sent to a school kept by a Mr. Faithful, at Hedley, where he remained until his father sent him to be prepared for college in the house of a clergyman named Blogard. In 1844 he entered at Trinity College, Cambridge, and in 1848 he took his degree, obtaining the place of 36th wrangler.

His father had intended him for the Church; but, as Mr. Carrington says, in speaking of himself in the preface to his *Redhill Catalogue*, "the tenour of my mathematical studies at the University of Cambridge, acting on mechanical propensities to which I had always been addicted, gradually made it clear to me that I was more naturally adapted for the pursuit of some physical science involving observation and mechanical ingenuity" than for a profession like the Church.

The Astronomical lectures of Professor Challis, which he had attended while a student at the University, gave the final impulse which led him, on leaving Cambridge, to prepare himself systematically for the work of an observatory. The consent of his father was given without opposition; and as his probable future means promised him the opportunity of pursuing his selected occupation on his private resources, it was, as he says, "with the object of acquiring experience and of avoiding wasteful and injudicious expense," that he applied for and held for nearly three years the appointment of Observer in the University of Durham. The Observatory had not long been founded, and was but poorly supplied with instruments. The results of his labours here were not very satisfactory to himself, but the accounts of his attempts at organised work while at the Observatory will be found in a little 8vo volume published in 1852.

Finding that there was but little chance of his being supplied with fresh instruments, he determined to abandon the Durham Observatory, and to establish one of his own. He had, however, while at work in the little University town, found good opportunities for reading, and had formed a plan for completing the survey of the heavens which had been commenced by Bessel and Argelander, and had only been carried by them as far as the eighty-first degree of north declination. And at the same time he determined to advance upon their survey by employing a meridian instrument of sufficient power to include stars of the 10th magnitude. After long search for a fitting

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